Abstract:
The focus of this research is an examination of the American election infrastructure with a specific look at Kentucky’s election security. This research was used to determine the most secure national system, while still protecting federalism. An in-depth comparison of both a centralized electronic system and a decentralized paper system was used to determine policy recommendations to increase American election security.

Federal Regulation and Guidelines:
- U.S. Constitution, Tenth Amendment - grants states the right to administer elections how they choose
- 2002 Help Americans Vote Act (HAVA) - gave out grants and incentives to states to encourage upgrading election systems
- Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 allotted $380 million to HAVA grants
- National Conference of State Legislature Guidelines created criteria for judging security of election infrastructure
- Guidelines created by the Election Assistance Commission created nationwide labs to check election machines

Center for American Progress’ Election Security Report
Kentucky was awarded a “D”
- Unsatisfactory results:
  - Out-of-date technology
  - Lack of audit-able paper trails
  - Faulty audit system based on a set percent of vote regardless of the margin of victory
- Satisfactory results:
  - Mail-in and paper only absentee voting
  - Verification of all machines in EAC labs

Policy Recommendations:
- Decentralized Paper voting
- Maintain election infrastructure diversity across nation:
- Increase penetration testing to heavily populated polling places
- Reallocate federal grants to incentivize updating optical/digital scanners instead of solely focusing on upgrading to DREs